

CHRISTIAN PERFORMING ARTS FESTIVAL



MAKING IT UP — Participants in the 2013 Christian Performing Arts Festival held Feb. 22-23 at Ridgecrest Church, Madison, perform together as a cuckoo clock during an improvisational acting session taught by David Mercer, a dramatist from Thomson, Ga. The annual event, sponsored by the Mississippi Cooperative Program and registration fees, drew 378 participants. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Artists gather at Madison church to celebrate the performing arts

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

More than 375 performing arts enthusiasts came together Feb. 22-23 at Ridgecrest Church, Madison, for the annual Christian Performing Arts Festival (CPAF) sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

"We had over 125 break-out conferences for attendees — I believe some of the best we've had in recent years. There was a great variety of training opportunities. Puppetry was the feature this year," said Ken Hall, CPAF coordinator and consultant in the MBCB

see PERFORMING on p. 10

"We had over 125 break-out conferences for attendees — I believe some of the best we've had in recent years."

Ken Hall

CPAF coordinator

MBC nominations being accepted

The 2013 Committee on Nominations approved by the messengers to the 177th Mississippi Baptist Convention will soon begin reviewing the trustee/board member positions on the boards and commissions of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) to serve in 2014. According to James Lewis, committee chairman and pastor of DeSoto Hills Church, Southaven, there are a limited number of vacancies to be filled on the following boards and commissions:

- Baptist Children's Village
- Baptist Health Systems, Inc. (Jackson)
- Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Inc. (Memphis)
- Board of Ministerial Education
- Education Commission
- Historical Commission
- Blue Mountain College
- Mississippi College
- William Carey University

- Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission, Inc.
- Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
- Mississippi Baptist Foundation

The Committee on Nominations will work with the heads of the institutions and agencies to bring a list of nominees to be approved by the messengers of the 178th annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention on October 29-30 at First Church, Jackson.

For nomination forms, contact Brenda Box, Executive Administration - Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Email: bbox@mbcb.org. Telephone: (601) 292-3201 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 201.

Completed forms should be sent to the Committee on Nominations, Attn: Brenda Box, Executive Administration, at the above address to be received no later than May 1.

Boy Scouts will falter if homosexual policy is changed, leaders told

NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) — The Boy Scouts will lose members and the support of faith-based organizations if it changes its policy on homosexuality, the president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee told two top Boy Scouts leaders during a meeting March 7 in Nashville.

Executive Committee President Frank S. Page met in Nashville with Boy Scouts Chief Executive Wayne Brock and Exxon Mobil CEO Rex Tillerson, who serves on the Boy Scouts executive board and is a past president of the board.

Brock and Tillerson urged Page to continue supporting the Boy Scouts if the organization overturns its policy preventing homosexual leaders and members.

The Boy Scouts board is expected to put the issue before its 1,400 voting members at Scouting's national convention in May. The proposal would remove the national rule and replace it with a local option, whereby each sponsoring organization would decide the policy.

Page, who is currently serving as interim pastor of First Church, Jackson, told Brock and Tillerson that no matter how well-intentioned they are, a national policy allowing homosexual leaders and members would trump the local councils who decide otherwise, embroiling local groups in legal issues.

Roger S. "Sing" Oldham, vice president for convention communications and relations with the Executive Committee, sat in on the meeting and gave Baptist Press a summary of the conversation. The meeting was cordial, Oldham said.

Page said many local groups will withdraw if the policy changes.

Tillerson, a professing Christian, shared with Page his faith testimony. He also explained why he believes the policy should be overturned. There are changing cultural winds on the issue of homosexuality, Tillerson said. Local Scouting organizations would retain control over their local leadership, he said, and

national gatherings of Scouts would accommodate troops who don't have gay leaders.

Tillerson asked Page to support the Boy Scouts no matter what decision is reached in May. Page said he could not do that, according to Oldham. God's truth is abiding, Page said, and principles should not be subject to the changing tide of human opinion.

Scripture, not opinion polls, should provide the basis for leadership, Page said.

Later in the day, Page tweeted: "Met today with one of the most powerful personalities I've ever met. He did not budge 1 inch. Nor did I."

The Boy Scouts are facing pressure from sponsoring corporations to change their policy but also pressure from their base to keep it. About 70% of all Scouting units are operated by faith-based organizations.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, also known as Mormons, leads all faith-based organizations with 38,000 units (420,000 participating youth), followed by United Methodists with 11,000 units (371,000 youth), and the Catholic Church with 8,570 units (283,000 youth).

10

Inside

Director

Sunday

Lessons

Editorial

Bibliography

How to

a Christian

Revival

Homecomings

Just for the Record

Classifieds

MAR 26 2013



From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

Nothing much has changed

It's been over a year now since the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama ordered religious institutions to go against their long-held beliefs on abortion and birth control under his controversial health care reform law commonly known as Obamacare.

Contrary to assurances in the days and months after that announcement, the administration has not backed down on the federal government's mandate that all health insurance companies provide contraceptives free of charge as a part of any individual or group policy they write. The government order includes birth control drugs and internal mechanical devices (IUDs, for example) that prevent a fertilized (living) human egg from being able to attach to the wall of the uterus, in effect causing a developing human to be aborted.

The government order also includes a dangerous class of drugs perversely named "emergency contraception," which do their deadly work after a developing human has already attached to the uterus, forcing the baby to die and be expelled from the mother's body — again, a classic definition of an abortion.

In addition, the full effect on a woman's health from the emergency contraception drugs — harsh enough to kill a baby in development — are not clear. That's the part of this story that our leaders don't want us to talk about.

The Obama administration apparently intends to stand by its position that there will be no exceptions for religious entities, such as the Southern Baptist Convention, but the government rule makers did deign to allow those religious entities a little extra time to get accustomed to the idea of violating their long-held beliefs and values.

"This encroachment on religious freedom is blatant and outrageous and should be taken seriously by those of us who are part of the body of believers, as well as by others who respect and regard this nation's history and constitutional foundation," said O.S. Hawkins, president of GuideStone Financial Resources in Dallas, the not-for-profit retirement and benefits board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

GuideStone has more than 200,000 participants worldwide who serve in about 36,000 churches, missions organizations, schools, hospitals, and other ministries, according to information provided by GuideStone. In addition to health and other insurance coverage, GuideStone also offers retirement, investment management, property and casualty coverage, and other services.

GuideStone has publicly announced its opposition to the Obamacare universal health insurance coverage that contains this ominous mandate, and has also joined a coalition of other church benefit plans to seek legislative and regulatory relief from various aspects of Obamacare that could threaten the ability of church health plans to serve their participants.

"One area of focus for many months has been the need for a conscience clause so that the convictions so important to us as believers are not disregarded or overrun in the name of healthcare reform," Hawkins said. "GuideStone continues to be active in addressing issues involving sanctity of life, and also is adamant about other issues of vital interest to the evangelical community that could conceivably impact health plans in future years."

"For example, GuideStone could never concede to extend coverage to same sex spouses or cover questionable stem cell treatments."

The Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville has announced its opposition to the government order. Roman Catholic bishops have also been vocal, going so far as to say they will not obey the government order.

If government at any level can order churches and church-affiliated entities to provide free of charge the means to destroy a human life, where will such government orders stop?

This travesty of government overstepping its constitutional limits must be resisted. Christians have already given up too much ground. We are already far down the proverbial slippery slope. Perhaps now, over this issue, is a good place to take a stand. At least it would be a start.

Ever consider your prayer posture?

Years ago, while reading one of my dozens of books by Andrew Murray, I learned that our modern posture of prayer — kneeling with hands clasped with head bowed — didn't come from Judaism but from a medieval ceremony. I undertook a study of that ceremony while writing a booklet, *Consecrate the People: Renewing Our Covenant Commitments to Jesus Christ*.

Homage ceremony

In the homage ceremony a king, lord, or landowner would call his vassals or subjects before him to pledge their loyalty and obedience to their lord. The king would hold out his open hands. The subject would kneel with bowed head and place his hands inside the hands of his king.

Then he would say these words, "I am your man." (The name of the ceremony comes from the Latin word for man.) That simple statement essentially meant, "I belong to you." It included the obligation to obey any request of the king, even the call to battle.

That pledge of obedience also included a readiness to obey even if the assignment would cost the life of the subject. It could become a pledge of obedience even unto death.

Christians were required to pledge their loyalty and obedience to their earthly king in this homage ceremony. They realized, however, they owed a higher loyalty to their Lord and King in heaven. King Jesus is seated on His throne with outstretched, nail-scarred hands. He is waiting for our surrender and pledge of loyalty and obedience to Him for the work of His kingdom.

Christians in the Middle Ages began to pray while kneeling with bowed head and clasped hands. By doing so, they were able to mentally enter into the throne room of heaven, kneel before King Jesus, and pledge to Him their loyalty and obedience: "King Jesus, today, I am your man (woman). Command me, and I will obey You!"

Entire consecration

That understanding of our common posture for prayer coupled with my study



Guest opinion
with Claude King

of the word, "consecrate," had a profound impact on my personal prayer life. One term in the Old Testament frequently translated "consecrate" is *qādāsh* (kaw-dash). It means "to sanctify, cleanse, purify or make holy."

If we desire to have power with God in prayer, we must consecrate ourselves. "The intense prayer of the righteous is very powerful" (James 5:16). Even Jesus Himself prayed for His followers: "Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth. ... I sanctify Myself for them, so they also may be sanctified by the truth" (John 17:17, 19).

If we want to be filled and empowered by His Holy Spirit, we need to be clean vessels. Let's pray for one another and consecrate/sanctify ourselves. Let's go after entire consecration, not a partial consecration. That very activity will lead us toward personal and corporate revival.

Another term for consecrate is made up of two Hebrew words. The first is *mālā* (maw-law) which means "to fill up or be full of." The second is *yād* (yawd) which means "open hand." Put these words together and the term literally means "to fill up the open hands."

The imagery for this term consecrate is a priest standing by the altar. He has open hands to receive your offering or sacrifice. As long as the sacrifice is in your hands, it belongs to you, but when you place the sacrifice into the open hands of the priest, it is consecrated to God. It belongs to God — all of it, and it becomes holy because God is holy.

We belong to Jesus

In Romans 12:1, Paul writes, "Brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present

see KING on p. 11

THE BaptistRecord

Editor
William H. Perkins Jr.
wperkins@mbcb.org

Associate Editor
Tony Martin
tmartin@mbcb.org

Layout/Design
Megan Young
myoung@mbcb.org

Advertising
Emily Jones
ejones@mbcb.org

Circulation Manager
Brenda Quattlebaum
bquattlebaum@mbcb.org

Editor Emeritus
Don McGregor

Baptist Record Advisory Committee:
Dwayne Parker, Flora Paul Sims, Pontotoc; Perry Burris, Terry Carl White, Meridian; Billie Buckley, Petal; Russell Mord, Sturgis

Postmaster:
Send changes of address to: The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Send news, communication, and address changes to: The Editor, Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Tel: (601) 968-3800
Fax: (601) 292-3330
E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org



SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

VOLUME 137 • NUMBER 11 • ISSN-0005-5778

Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$10.35 per year payable in advance. Economy plans available for cooperating Mississippi churches. Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items — one calendar week prior to requested publication date. Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to requested publication date. All submissions are subject to editing.



North American Missions

**WHATEVER
IT TAKES
REACHING THE ONE**

National Goal: \$70 Million
AnnieArmstrong.com

NAMB missionary: human trafficking in U.S. closer than many here believe

HIGH POINT, N.C. (BP) — Sandra Johnson refuses to turn her back on the problem of human trafficking, and she believes other Baptists shouldn't either.

For Johnson, a North American Mission Board (NAMB) missionary based in North Carolina, the issue of human trafficking is personal, and it's a problem that is right in our "own backyard."

Human trafficking is the fastest-growing crime in the world, and Johnson said every Christian should be involved in ending it. Right now there are believed to be around 27 million people living in slavery. Children

as young as six years old are being sold on the streets and on the Internet, Johnson said. "I can't turn my back on that...it could easily be my grandchildren," said Johnson, a member of Green Street Church in High Point, N.C., and president and founder of Triad Ladder of Hope, a nonprofit organization that helps human trafficking victims escape from bondage and rebuild their lives, sharing the love of Jesus with them in the process.

"There are more people enslaved today than in any other time in history... This is 'Free America,' but it's not." Johnson was commissioned by NAMB during the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's annual meeting in Greensboro last November as a Mission Service Corps (MSC) missionary. While helping people escape slavery through Triad Ladder of Hope, she also looks for opportunities to share her faith.

Johnson said she's always had a heart for international missions. "[International missions] was my dream," she said. "I'm basically doing international missions here at home."

By giving through the Cooperative Program and to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions, Southern Baptists help provide training and ministry-related support for missionaries like Johnson.

As a MSC missionary, Johnson

receives direct financial support through donations and ministry partners, which include several N.C. Baptist churches like Green Street Church.

Kevin Ezell, president of NAMB in Alpharetta, Ga., said during Johnson's commissioning service that NAMB seeks to find more ways to fight issues like human trafficking throughout the U.S. and Canada.

"When you hear about it for the very first time, you don't think... there is a need in North Carolina," Ezell said. "I did not realize North Carolina was in the [top 10], and Atlanta is [near] the top as far as the most challenging area [for human trafficking]."

Missionaries like Johnson, Ezell said, are examples of those who are willing to step out and make a difference for Christ.

This past year, Triad Ladder of Hope has put an intense focus on helping victims find jobs through training opportunities. They seek out victims through visiting homeless and domestic violence shelters.

They also reach out to women who are vulnerable to human trafficking through working in strip clubs. About once a month Johnson works with ministry volunteers who go into clubs to build relationships with the women there. While volunteers hand out gift bags, they seek to find those who may not be there by choice.

"Many victims of sex trafficking can be found in strip clubs," Johnson said. "Sometimes it's a husband that is forcing them to be there, and he takes all of the money."

It's a ministry that takes time and patience.

"The first time it's kind of awkward," Johnson said, "but you have to build that relationship as you go in. Once we've been in several times, they begin to trust you and start talking to you more. We care about them... When God opens the door we will share Christ with them and let them know... that Jesus loves them."

Creating awareness is the key

to helping fight human trafficking. Many Americans don't realize how the products they buy every day can have an impact on those working in some factories, where human trafficking runs rampant.

"Some people use as many 150 slaves a day," Johnson said. "It's unreal." Johnson encourages people to check out the website: <http://slaveryfootprint.org> to learn more.

"If there is one thing that people need to know, [it] is that this is a problem [that]...could be right in your neighborhood. It's that bad in North Carolina. It can be someone who knocks on your door and is selling a product... It could be someone living next door to you. It could be somebody doing your nails. It could be somebody serving your food in a restaurant. It's right in your face, literally."

Johnson shared how she used to attend church with a woman who was being trafficked. She was a nanny, and the people she worked for didn't pay her, Johnson said. The woman said she felt trapped because she was living in the U.S. illegally and genuinely cared for the children in the home.

Triad Ladder of Hope has helped reunite trafficking victims with their families. They even provide simple things like a bag of groceries for victims who struggle to make a living.

In addition to financial support and awareness, prayer is the most critical thing the ministry needs. "That's the very first thing I tell everybody," Johnson said. "We need people to pray about this issue."

"When [volunteers go into a strip club] we have someone sitting in the parking lot praying for them," she said. "We cover everything with prayer. We are firm believers [in prayer]."

Occasionally Johnson will receive a phone call from a former victim who has rebuilt her life through the ministry. "It's so sweet to get those phone calls," she said. "You do get attached to them... They're survivors."

Editor's note: For more information go to triadladderofhope.org. To report a human trafficking case, contact the National Trafficking Information and Referral Hotline at (888) 373-7888.



JOHNSON

Plea for prayer goes out for Venezuelan people after president's death

CARACAS, Venezuela (BP and local reports) — With the March 5 death of Venezuelan strongman Hugo Chávez, 58, the Evangelical Council of Venezuela issued a statement on its website and Facebook page offering condolences to the president's family and all Venezuelans and called for Christians to pray for peace and unity in their nation.

The statement from the Council, which counts the National Baptist Convention of Venezuela among its membership, urged Venezuelans to "avoid hatred, damaging language and confrontational attitudes" during this time of national grief and to "look to God as our only giver of grace and truth."

Alluding to political divisions and tensions that have plagued Venezuela during the 14-year presidential administration of Chávez, the statement encouraged Venezuelans to "live together in the midst of differences" and to "maintain a heart free of bad feelings so that we may see the hand of God acting in our country."

Citing several verses from

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 5-7, the statement also challenged Venezuelans to be peacemakers — to "be a country that constructs peace and rejects confrontation."

The country declared seven days of mourning for their president, although Venezuelans face an uncertain future after the Chávez presidency.

"Wednesday, scores of people came into the street [in Caracas] to view his funeral procession and show their respect for the fallen leader," a Christian worker in Venezuela said. "Venezuela plays a critical role in influencing the affairs of Latin America and has one of the largest petroleum reserves of any country in the world."

The capital, Caracas, is one of the least evangelized cities in Latin America. Thus, the death of the president behooves Christians everywhere to pray not only for the peace and unity of the nation, but that its citizens will use the death of their fallen leader to reflect upon the frailty of life and seek eternal security in the person of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Testimony reveals rise in anti-Semitism worldwide

WASHINGTON (BP) — Hatred for people of Jewish descent is on the rise, according to congressional testimony by Jewish, Christian, and Muslim leaders.

The witnesses told a U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee about current problems and possible solutions for anti-Semitism. They also addressed the need to cultivate religious liberty.

Anti-Semitism "is an ugly reality that won't go away by ignoring or wishing it away," said Rep. Chris Smith, R.-N.J., chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations.

"It must be defeated. Thus, we gather to enlighten, motivate and share ideas on how not just to mitigate this centuries-old obsession but to crush this pernicious form of hate," he said.

Despair and hope marked many of the testimonies. Recent attacks on Jewish people include graffiti scrawled across holy synagogue walls, arson of synagogues, and physical violence.

The attacks have been frequent and so widespread that Jewish people in various regions of the world have begun to hide their ethnic or religious identity for fear of their lives, witnesses said dur-

ing their Feb. 27 testimony.

Katrina Lantos Swett, chairwoman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, discussed the origins of anti-Semitism by tracing it back to the biblical story of Esther and Haman in Persia. By drawing parallels between ancient Persia and modern-day Iran, the cyclical effect of this rising desire to purge human society of those who a few see as "unfit" can clearly be seen, she said.

"Some are neo-Nazis who express their admiration for Adolf Hitler. Others are racist, skinhead groups active in many countries. Many are violent religious extremists who distort the religion of Islam to suit their own intolerant political aims," Swett said.

The "stakes are way too high" for Americans and citizens of other countries not to fight for the preservation of human progress and civilization, she said.

The desire for domination is the motivation of some anti-Semitic groups, said Zuhdi Jasser, president of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy. Jasser discussed how some Muslim societies are currently using anti-Semitic imagery, profiling, and demonization of Jews to "wield Islamic thought."

Pulpits are interesting pieces of church furniture. In the Old Testament the scripture says that they built a pulpit of wood. In that case, it probably referred to an elevated platform so that everyone could hear the reading and teaching of the Word of God. Today depending on where you are, what the history of the church is, and the tradition of their services you will find pulpits of every shape and virtually every material. Pulpits are uniquely related to the church and are typically thought of as the place where the Word of God is proclaimed. Some people have referred to the pulpit as the sacred desk referring to the fact that it is a desk-like podium where the sacred things of God are shared.

Through the years I have had the privilege of standing behind so many pulpits of all shapes and sizes, but in recent years I have come to deeply appreciate some of the pulpits that God has put in my life which actually do not look like church pulpits. I have found that they may even be more accessible and at times more effective than the ones that stand in the sanctuary. Let me explain.

For years, I have either been a runner or a walker. Every day I head out in the early morning hours to get my time in, and during the cold winter months it is really dark. There are days when I finish my walk and it is still dark. During the spring, early fall, and good ole warm summer the sun gets up early and brightens everything. Regardless, I still head out to get my routine accomplished. Sometimes I am meditating on a certain thing that I have before me or God has put on my heart. At other



The Shape of Pulpits

times, I am thinking about houses and families as I pass by. Sometimes it is something that I know they are struggling with or it could be something that I do not have a clue about, but God does. And so, I pray for them.

From time to time over the years I have had a neighbor, a friend, or even someone that I may never have met stop and talk to me in those early morning times. Almost without exception there was some need that they had, some problem that someone else had, or maybe a question they were wondering about and so they would stop, roll down their window, and talk to me. Most of the time, they knew that I was a preacher. Oftentimes what they wanted to talk to me about had spiritual implications and applications. I would lean on the car door and talk to them about the Word, the Word of God, and what the Lord could be saying about a certain

situation, or maybe I just told them that I would be praying for them.

After this had occurred numerous times, one day it just hit me that in my getting up and going out on the street every day God was bringing people by so that I could share His Word and His love with them. I began to refer to it as a car window pulpit. A few times when someone would stop and talk to me I would feel as though they were interrupting my walk and that I needed to be getting on down the road. Then I remembered that some years ago someone had suggested in a devotional thought that any time those kinds of things happen and create a disappointment in you that you need to take the disappointment and cross out the "d" and replace it with an "a" and recognize that sometimes our disappointments are His appointments. And so I realized that time and again God was giving

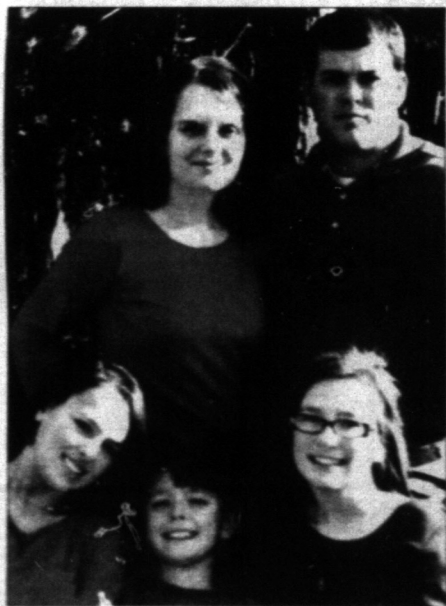
me a congregation of one or two and a Word from Him to be shared standing at a car window pulpit.

While I have preached thousands of sermons at pulpits in churches, I have now preached hundreds of sermons at car window pulpits. What I have discovered even beyond that is that there are pulpits or platforms for sharing almost everywhere you turn. Some of you spend hours at work every day and have never discovered that you have a desk-top pulpit. Others of you who travel and call on people one after another have not discovered that God has given you an entrance to people's lives. You have never thought about it being a pulpit, but it is. He wants to use you.

Some of you may be teachers at school and while you are teaching science or math, English or geography and think that you cannot preach, you stand before children and young people who desperately need to know that the person standing in front of them cares about them. You can communicate so much with a genuine love from God. Your pulpit can look like a truck, boat, bulldozer, cement mixer, cash register, tractor, teller's window, or a meat counter in the grocery. Pulpits come in all shapes and sizes. As with the pulpit at church, what brings life and meaning to it is the significance of the life of the person who is bringing the message. That is also true with you. So today watch for the place, opportunity, and people that will hear as He places you in the pulpit of life to share His love.

The author can be contacted at jfutral@mbcb.org.

Staff Changes

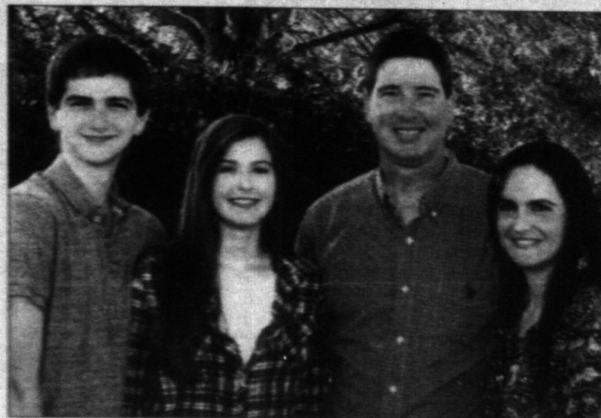


LIBERTY CHURCH, UNION COUNTY, has called Derick Finley as pastor. He is shown with his wife Joni and children Attie, Haylee, and Isaac.

WELLMAN CHURCH, LINCOLN ASSOCIATION, has called Jeff Davis as pastor. He is shown with his wife Bridget, daughter Rachel, and son Aaron.



EBENEZER CHURCH, HOLMES COUNTY, has called Luke Edwards, Benton, as pastor. He is shown with his wife Natalie and daughters Kasey and Kameron.



PEARL VALLEY CHURCH, WESSON, has called James Harris as pastor. He is shown with his wife, Vaneesa.

In other Staff Changes:

► **Michael Bishop** is available for pulpit supply. He has recently been licensed to the gospel ministry. He can be reached at (662) 736-4480 or 744-0658.

POLITICS

Another political fight on tap over exemption from abortion mandate

WASHINGTON (BP) — A bill with 50 co-sponsors introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives on March 5 would exempt organizations and businesses from the Obama administration's controversial abortion/contraceptive mandate.

Sponsored by Republican Reps. Diane Black (Tn.), Jeff Fortenberry (Ne.) and John Fleming (La.), the bill would provide a full exemption to any organization or business whose religious beliefs are violated by the mandate, which requires organizations and businesses to carry employee insurance covering abortion-causing drugs and contraceptives.

The abortion-causing drugs come under brand names such as Plan B and ella. The bill, Black said after introducing it, would protect First Amendment rights.

"Non-compliance to the administration's mandate is forcing many Americans to choose between respecting their religious convictions or following the law," Black said. "If they refuse to comply, many will be forced out of business, leaving thousands of Americans without jobs or health care coverage."

At least 218 votes are needed to pass a bill in the 435-member House, but even if it passes there it faces an uphill climb in the Democrat-controlled U.S. Senate and a likely veto by U.S. President Barack Obama.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville, said, "We would have some Democratic senators who would support the bill if it got on the floor" of the Senate. He mentioned Democratic Sen. Bob Casey Jr. (Pa.) as a likely yes vote.

Land supports the bill. "This is a question of conscience, not contraception. It's a question of religious freedom, not reproductive freedom," Land said during a press conference at the National Religious Broadcasters convention in Nashville on March 5. "Freedom of religion leaves citizens of faith free to

bring their religious convictions to bear in every arena of life.

The bill styled as the Health Care Conscience Rights Act, also would provide conscience protection to individuals and health care entities that refuse to provide, pay for, or refer patients to abortion doctors.

The mandate was announced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in August 2011 as part of the new health care law. Although the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the health care law last June, the justices' ruling did not deal with the religious liberty issues surrounding the mandate.

A total of 48 lawsuits have been filed against the mandate and, so far, opponents of the mandate are winning. Of the 17 court rulings involving businesses, opponents have won 12 times and lost five.

The latest victory by opponents of the mandate came Feb. 28 when a federal court granted a temporary injunction to a Missouri-based plumbing products manufacturer, protecting the business from the mandate.

The judge, Orie Smith, was nominated by U.S. President Bill Clinton. Smith's jurisdiction resides within the Eighth Circuit, where the court of appeals previously had issued an injunction against the mandate.

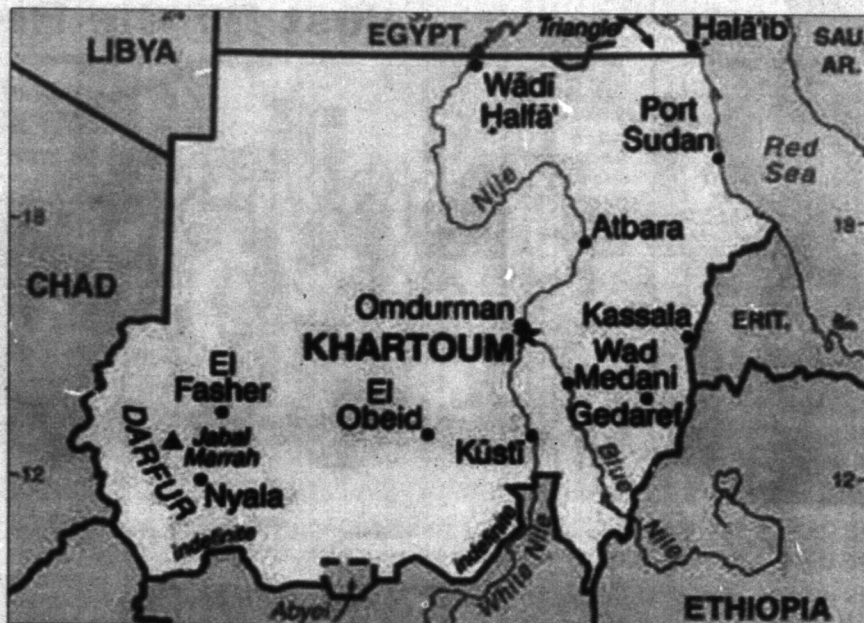
"Americans should be free to honor God and live according to their consciences whether they are at home, church, or work," said attorney Jonathan R. Whitehead, who is associated with the Alliance Defending Freedom in Scottsdale, Az. He defended in court the Missouri company, Sioux Chief Manufacturing.

"The court was right to stop enforcement of this unconstitutional mandate against Sioux Chief and its owners. They, like all other family-run businesses, have the God-given freedom to live and lead their company according to the values of their faith. American entrepreneurs cannot be forced to surrender their First Amendment freedoms when they go to work."

"Americans should be free to honor God and live according to their consciences whether they are at home, church, or work."

Jonathan R. Whitehead

attorney associated with the Alliance Defending Freedom



Persecution against believers continues in Sudan, South Sudan

KHARTOUM, Sudan (BP) — Mohammed Khidir Khalil Hassan, a Sudanese convert to Christianity from Islam, has to be careful what songs he sings to his sons.

Nearly a year ago after his wife left him, a Sudanese court had ruled that as a convert from Islam he was forbidden to see his children, then ages three and five. An appeals court overturned the ruling last October and allowed him visits, but he knows any pretext could be used to keep him from them.

During one recent visit, one of the boys asked him to sing a Christian praise song entitled, Hosanna, but he refrained knowing his ex-wife and her Muslim family could use that as evidence that he was trying to convert the children to Christianity — which would automatically cancel his visitation rights.

"I see no freedom at all," he said, pointing out that his ex-wife and her mother closely monitor his visits. "Such a system needs to be confronted. We have to decide to work for change in Sudan."

A Sudanese court had ruled in March 2012 that his wife, as a member of "the popular religion," be awarded custody of the children. His wife had presented a copy of a U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees certificate showing Khalil's testimony as a Christian, as they had obtained asylum in Egypt from religious persecution in Sudan.

The certificate was proof enough for a Sudanese judge to rule that the marriage be

annulled and the children handed over to the spouse professing Islam.

The ruling perhaps reflects the prevailing anti-Christianity hostility in the air since South Sudan seceded in July 2011. Harassment, violence, and arrests of Christians have intensified since the largely Christian South Sudan seceded and Sudan President Omar al-Bashir vowed to root the country more deeply in Sharia (Islamic law).

Hassan now visits the boys twice a month, Friday and Saturday of the first and second week, for four hours each. "What surprises me is that my wife denied that she was or has ever been a Christian before, yet we had a Christian wedding and during the birth of our first born, women from the Dinka community came to celebrate with us, as well as offering to us Christian prayers."

Khalil, who converted to Christianity in 2001, had met Manal Hassan in 2007. At that time she said she was neither a Christian nor a Muslim. The bride's Muslim family learned that Khalil was a Christian but had no objection to the marriage, he said.

By 2010, the couple had joined an undisclosed church and had become visibly active in it. Opposition from their families grew, and after threats from family members and others intensified the couple fled to Egypt in January 2011. Hassan and his young family obtained asylum as refugees in Egypt, and he was heartened that his

wife was attending church with him.

In August 2011, his Muslim mother-in-law visited them in Egypt. Without his knowledge, she took his wife and children back to Sudan, he said. Hearing nothing from them, on Christmas Day 2011 Khalil decided to return to an undisclosed town in Sudan to search for them.

He was shocked to discover that his wife had filed for divorce on grounds that she was a Muslim and he a Christian. A Sudanese court had granted her custody of their two sons and forbade him to see them, he said.

"How does she deny the house of Christian marriage after four years?" Hassan said. "I am happy that people have known of my Christian conviction in Sudan, and I am ready to stand to the end. When the churches in Sudan are being destroyed, I tell my brothers and sisters that we need to come out boldly, but many shy off."

Silence, he said, is not the answer. He said Christians need to confront but in a peaceful manner. "I will continue working for freedom for my children and for change in Sudan," he said. "Some of my brothers and sisters did nothing, but yet they were jailed. We need to reflect the life and the truth of Jesus."

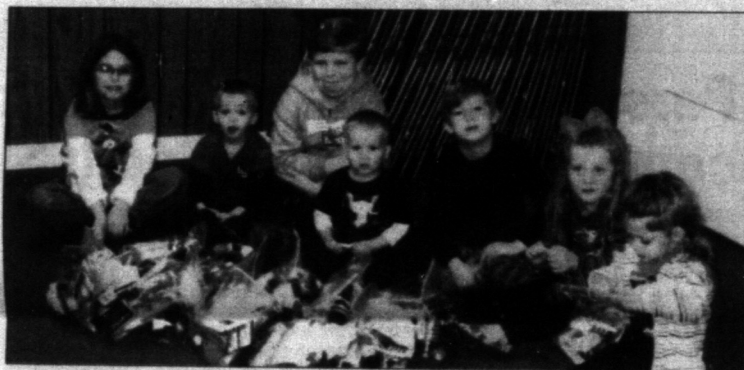
Editor's note: This story first appeared at Morning-StarNews.org, an independent news service focusing exclusively on the persecution of Christians worldwide.

Just for the Record



The International Friend to Friend Ministry of **FIRST CHURCH, JACKSON**, teaches English as a Second Language during the school year. Shown are the participants.

The children of **COLD-WATER CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA**, assembled disaster relief bags Feb. 16.



CHILDREN OF UNITY CHURCH, IUKA, participated in a Valentine banquet for the church's senior citizens. Wayne Crum, pastor.



ROSELAND PARK CHURCH, PICAYUNE, recently ordained Lee Marshall as deacon. Shown are pastor Walt Barnes, Marshall, Glennis Marshall, and Carl Myers.



The Folks Over Fifty of **BRANCH CHURCH, MORTON**, celebrated the joy of Jesus during their December Christmas fellowship.

Wondersbruck

with Margaret Feinberg

It's time to live astounded by God

April 5, 7 p.m.
April 6, 9 a.m.

For more information, call THE W.B. at 666-1234 or visit www.wbchurch.org

Just for the Record

In other Church News:

> **Hathorn Church, Goss**, will host The Greatest Week in History: Luke's Account of the Passion Week, Mar. 17-20. Sun., 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.;

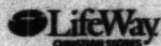
James Messer, speaker; Duke and Linda Barnes, music; Wade Barnes, pastor.

> **Salem Church, Collins**, is hosting Mark Lanier in concert Mar. 24, 6 p.m. Love offering.

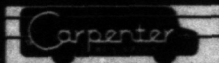
5-YEAR/60,000-MILE BODY & CHASSIS WARRANTY STANDARD WITH EVERY NEW BUS PURCHASE

Carpenter Bus Sales has gone the extra mile again in providing a unique 5-year/60,000-mile body & chassis warranty* with every new bus they sell!

An option like this would normally add \$3,000 to the price of a bus. With Carpenter Bus, it comes standard.



Call 866-750-5656
or visit us online at
CarpenterBus.com



*Excludes all other Limited Warranties at www.carpenterbus.com/warranty

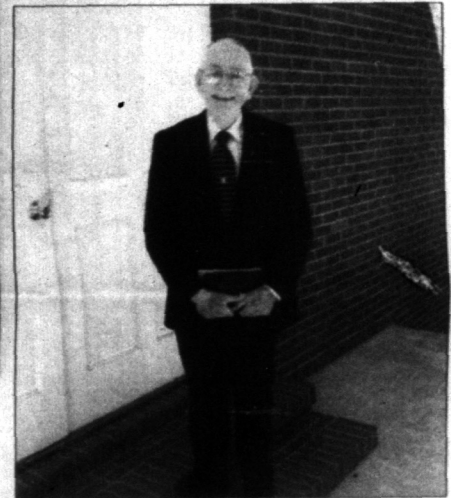


HERITAGE HEIGHTS CHURCH, LAUREL, held a deacon ordination Feb. 24. Shown are pastor Ken Regan and new deacons Charles Brady, Kelly Simmons, Joe Bigbie, Larry Hupe, and Mike Burger.



CHESTER CHURCH, ACKERMAN, ordained Warren Hunt to the gospel ministry Feb. 17. Shown are pastor Rob Faulk and Hunt. Hunt has been called to pastor Old Mt. Pisgah Church, Choctaw Co.

EASTPORT CHURCH, IUKA, honored Billy Credille for 50 years of service. Credille was ordained Mar. 3, 1963, and his first pastorate was at Eastport. He received an engraved watch for his service.



THE R.C. RYAN CENTER
FOR BIBLICAL STUDIES

READ PRAY SING

*The Psalms as
an Entryway to
the Scriptures*

APRIL 12-13

With Andy Davis, Heath Thomas and Union faculty
For more information and to register, visit
uu.edu/events/ReadPraySing



EXCELLENCE-DRIVEN | CHRIST-CENTERED
PEOPLE-FOCUSED | FUTURE-DIRECTED



FIRST CHURCH, CALHOUN CITY, honored Wayne Gullett and his wife Tillie for their months of service to the church as transitional pastor. Shown are the Gulletts and Woody Jones, deacon chairman, who presented the Gulletts with a gift of appreciation.

The WMU of
**CALVARY
CHURCH,
BOGUE
CHITTO**, was
in charge of the
annual Valentine
Banquet. The San-
difer Family, Co-
lumbus, provided
entertainment.
Shown are Laura,
Lucy, and Scott
Sandifer.



College News



MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE senior Josh Carver, Leland, and professor Emily Fokeladeh were recognized at the 2013 Higher Education Appreciation Day, Working for Academic Excellence, sponsored by the HEADWAE program. The event was held Feb. 26 in Jackson. The Legislature established the HEADWAE program as a way to commend outstanding students and faculty from each of the state's 36 public and private institutions. Shown are Carver and Fokeladeh.

Four **MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE** students entered the Mississippi Music Teachers Association Collegiate Spring competition at Belhaven University, Jackson, Feb. 23. Shown are professor Angie Willoughby; Maleesa Branchley; Mary Catherine McKibben, second place, freshman/sophomore solo division; Robbie Blaine, first place in the freshman/sophomore solo division; Christa Morgan, honorable mention, freshman/sophomore solo division; and professor Michael Rushing.



The State Keyboard Festival was held Feb. 23 in the chapel of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Students were adjudicated by faculty from our three Baptist colleges. Shown are Howard Kever, **WILLIAM CAREY COLLEGE**; Robert Knupp, **MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE**; and L. Darwin Brooks, **BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE**.



In other College News:

► People seeking to purchase tickets to hear former Florida Governor Jeb Bush headline **Mississippi College's** Spring Scholarship Dinner will face a March 19 deadline. The program on the Clinton campus is set for the evening of March 26th with Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant among the special guests. Booked at Anderson Hall, the event is MC's biggest scholarship fund-raiser of the year. Beginning in 2008, the dinner has generated more than \$1.3 million for student scholarships. For information on tickets, contact Amy Rowan of the MC Office of Advancement at (601) 925-3257.



WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY'S School of Education hosted the eighth annual Young Authors Celebration (YAC) on Friday, March 1. First to eighth graders from area schools were invited with their teachers and parents to attend this program. Special guest speaker this year was Robert St. John, owner of the Purple Parrot Café and Crescent City Grill, and writes a weekly column and several cookbooks. Almost 300 students from 7 schools participated in YAC. Participants included Columbia Academy, J.E. Johnson Elementary of Bassfield, New Hope Elementary of Collins, North Jones Elementary of Laurel, Oak Grove Primary of Hattiesburg, Purvis Upper Elementary, and The Dynamic Dyslexia Design School (The 3-D School) in Petal. The featured authors and illustrators were: Rick Anderson, Fleur Bradley, Kym Garraway, Dr. Ben Hornsby, Jenny Kemp, Jean Sauls, Barbara Tillery, and Diane Williams. Shown are students posing with books they wrote.

BIBL i O C I P H E R

SEB PXECEAFAB CXUTT KE NXA POTT
ES REK, NXA CUDAC OC DM ZBENXAB,
UKG DM COCNAB, UKG DENXAB.
DUBW NXBAA: NXOBNM-SOFA

Clue: O = H

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark 1:15

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, is 2005

THE Baptist Record

Tom's Fried Pies
meat pies • fruit pies • cream pies
OK Pancakes, fried pies, more veggie pies
827 Hwy 49 South
Richland MS 39218
(next to the tractor store)
769-257-7351
Mon-Sat 6 AM - 5 PM • Sun 12 PM - 5 PM

Minister of Music and Worship

Springfield Baptist Church in Springfield, TN is seeking a full-time leader of music and worship.

The worship leader will be responsible for planning and conducting worship services, directing various choirs, praise team and instrumentalists. Our worship services are a blend of traditional and contemporary music. A bachelor's degree in music is required. A masters degree is preferred. Please send all resumes to Springfield Baptist Church, Music Search Committee, 400 North Main Street, Springfield, TN 37172. Please include a recent worship service DVD. Emails may be sent to: bellhughes05@gmail.com.

CD or IRA Maturing?

7.00%
First Year
GUARANTEED
Includes First Year Bonus

Learn the Safe & Secure Way to Earn Stock Market Linked Returns Without Market Risk to Your Principal

L.D. O'Mire
Financial Services
1-800-844-3254

ABCHomes seeks servant-minded people who are called to a ministry, not just a job.

Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes (ABCHomes) is seeking houseparent couples for the Baptist Home in Monticello, Ark., and the Boys Ranch in Harrison, Ark. These full-time positions include salary, medical insurance, life insurance and paid leave. For information: Children's Home, contact Randy Luper 870.367.5358 or rluper@abchomes.org; or Boys Ranch, contact Bill VonderMehden 870.741.5784 or bvondermehden@abchomes.org.

MSAudio LLC

Design & Integration of Professional Audio, Video, & Lighting
Church, Conference Room, School
Equipment sales, service and installation

Trooper Hales
info@msaudiollc.com

P.O. Box 1575
Clinton, MS 39060

Ph 601-923-9947
Fax 601-924-2880

Chicago schools to begin sex ed in kindergarten

CHICAGO (BP) — A new sexual health program in the Chicago Public Schools mandates that a set amount of time be spent on sex education in every grade, beginning in kindergarten. The program also will discuss sexual orientation and gender identity for the first time.

Under the new policy, approved by the Chicago Board of Education Feb. 27, kindergartners and first graders will focus on topics such as anatomy, healthy relationships, and personal safety, the Chicago Tribune reported.

In second and third grades, the focus will be on growth and development. Fourth graders will learn about the physical, social, and emotional aspects of puberty, along with the causes of HIV transmission, the Tribune reported.

After fifth grade, the program will include discussions about human reproduction, healthy decision-making, bullying, and contraception.

"They're very much pushing an extreme agenda across the board, both to normalize sex and begin the conversation earlier, and in total the K-12 curricula is explicit and not in the best health interests of the young people," Valerie Huber, executive director of the National Abstinence Education Association, told Baptist Press.

Stephanie Whyte, chief health officer for Chicago Public Schools, told the Tribune the overhaul was motivated by the fact that more students are sexually active. "Fifty-two percent of our students have had sexual intercourse," Whyte said, referring to the most recent school system data.

The policy also was designed to align with the standards in President Obama's national HIV/AIDS strategy unveiled in 2010, according to ABC News.

The vision for that strategy states that the "United States will become a place where new HIV infections are rare and when they do occur, every person, regardless of age, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socioeconomic circumstance, will have unfettered access to high quality, life-extending care, free from stigma and discrimination."

Parents or guardians of students may opt out of Chicago's new sexual health education program.

Huber said she is "vehemently opposed" to starting sex education in kindergarten.

"I think it really goes back to

how we define age appropriate. The groups who are promoting those standards would essentially define age appropriate as anything that can be cognitively understood even though it's not developmentally appropriate, so really there are no limits to what you can share as long as you make the vocabulary elementary enough.

"We think that does not make it age appropriate. It breaks down barriers of modesty. It also opens up topics long before the curiosity and the understanding of the child is there, and we think that if there are specific questions, certainly those should be asked, but they should be asked of parents, not in our kindergarten classrooms," she said.

Nate Adams, executive director of the Illinois Baptist State

Association, said it's his view that sex education is best handled in the family.

"I would certainly personally be very cautious about entrusting [that] to the public school system — especially in a time when the culture's view of sex is so different from the Bible's in so many ways. We would certainly believe that the family is a more appropriate place for that to take place," Adams told Baptist Press.

Chicago has the third-largest public school system in the United States, and Huber said their actions could influence other communities.

"They are not unique, but they are a very large school district in a very large city," she said. "So I think the fact that they are doing this could bring other more reticent communities along the way."

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either e-mail, CD or DVD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

MS POSITIONS

BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR WITH TWENTY SIX YEARS OF EXPERIENCE SEEKS CHURCH within 40 mile radius of Jackson/Brandon area. Interested in opportunities to fill pulpit or to interview for a permanent position. James Blakely can be reached at 601-405-3234.

CARRIAGE HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH IN SOUTHAVEN IS SEEKING A PART TIME DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY. Please mail resumes to 8352 Farmington Drive West, Southaven, MS 38671 or e-mail them to carriagehills@aatt.net

JOURNEY OF FAITH, BRANDON, MS IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC, a team player, called to music. Send resume to Music Staff Search, Journey of Faith, 5413 Highway 18, Brandon, MS 39042.

JOURNEY OF FAITH, BRANDON, MS IS SEEKING MUSICIANS: LEAD GUITAR, BASS GUITAR, DRUMMER. Must be dedicated team player, ministry driven. Please send contact info to jofchurch@aatt.net or contact Sharon @ 601-939-5002.

BUCATUNNA BAPTIST CHURCH located in the Energy-Snell community of Clarke County, MS is seeking God's man for the position of a bivocational Youth Minister. Please email resumes to dddhc@bellsouth.net or mail to BBC Search Committee, P.O. Box 665, Marion, MS 39342.

PROVIDENCE BAPTIST CHURCH, 1180 EATONVILLE ROAD, HATTIESBURG, MS IS IN SEARCH OF A PART-TIME ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT. If interested, please mail resumes to Providence Baptist Church, Attn: Marc Taylor, 1180 Eatonville Road, Hattiesburg, MS 39401.

UNION HALL BAPTIST CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN, MS, IS SEEKING A PART-TIME BI-VOCATIONAL YOUTH DIRECTOR. Resumes may be mailed to the church at: 1242 Nola Road N.E., Brookhaven, MS 39601, ATTENTION: Youth Director Search Committee.

STEENS FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, STEENS, MS, IS CURRENTLY IN SEARCH OF A PASTOR. Candidates must preach only from the King James Version Bible.

CLASSIFIEDS

THE 11:45 CALL BY JOEL F. AND BRENDA KLUTZ BLAKELY, is now at Lifeway Christian Bookstores online or Lifeway stores special order. This expository Bible Study of the Book of Jude is suitable for personal or group Bible Studies. How will you answer The CALL? Contact Brenda or Joel at 662-258-6006 or the1145call@gmail.com.

WINDOW AND SCREEN SHOP - WINDOWS and storm windows built to fit your opening. Plus new window screens and rescreen old screens. Call Tom Cook 601-709-4879.

NORRIS BOOKBINDING COMPANY, INC., OLD BIBLES REBOUND. Also, church bulletins and hymnals. For more information call 662-453-7424 or fax us at 662-455-6743.

20 FREE 5X6 OFFICE PARTITIONS (BLUE IN COLOR) available for pickup only at Parkway Baptist Church in Hernando, MS. (662)429-6045

STAINED GLASSWORKS, INC., serving MS & AL since 1992. Call 800-605-2970

GATLINBURG RENTALS: Cabin \$95/night and Condo \$75/night. Contact: 832 922 0401 or E-mail: pdwi4760@aatt.net for information and booking.

GET THE BEST RATES ON: Health Insurance and Medicare Supplements. Call 1-800-541-8196 or visit www.TurnerInsuranceOnline.com

GET AWAY AT BETSY'S LIL' CABINS call for a brochure 601-940-6841.

STAINED GLASS: new windows and repairs. Hopper Stained Glass, Jackson, 601-502-0202.

CHURCH PEW UPHOLSTERY, FREE ESTIMATES. Davis Upholstery, Quitman, Miss., phone 601-776-6617.

AFFORDABLE BEACHSIDE VACATION CONDOS: GULF SHORES & ORANGE BEACH, AL. Rent direct from Christian Family Owners, Lowest Prices on the Beach. www.gulfshorescondos.com <http://www.gulfshorescondos.com> 251-550-9421, 205-556-0368, 205-752-1231.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HACKLEBURG, ALABAMA IS PRAYERFULLY SEEKING A PASTOR to lead this conservative small town church of 300 members. A Bachelor's Degree from a Baptist College or Seminary Degree is preferred. Send resumes to First Baptist Church Hackleburg, P.O. Box 128, Hackleburg, Alabama 35564 or email at hfbcoffice@gmail.com by March 31, 2013.

SEBREN'S SIDING www.sebrenhomeimprovement.com. Christian owned Don & Rita Sebren. 601-992-2092. All home improvements, siding, energy efficient windows, metal & shingle roofs, screen & sunrooms, patio covers, decks, room additions, kitchen & bath upgrades.

Revivals & Homecomings

► **East Pleasant Grove Church, Quitman:** Revival, Mar. 21 - 23, 6:30 p.m.; Dan Lanier, speaker; Paul Davis, music.

► **Holly Springs Church, Brookhaven:** Homecoming, Mar. 17; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; short business meeting, 10:05 a.m. followed by special music with Revelation and covered dish lunch.

► **West End Church, West Point:** Revival, Mar. 17 - 20; Sun., 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Mickey Dalrymple, speaker; Jerome Key, music.

► **First Church, Tchula:** 100th anniversary, Mar. 17; services, 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch; James Sadler, speaker.

► **Wheeler Grove Church, Corinth:** Bailey Smith Real Evangelism Conference, Mar. 20 - 22; speakers include David Ring, Gerald Harris, Rick Coram, Don Savell, Junior Hill, and Tommy Steele. Music guests include Mike Speck Trio, Triumphant Quartet, and the Collingworth Family. Meals provided Thursday and Friday. For more information, visit www.wheelergrovebaptist.com.

► **Long Creek Church, Meridian:** Revival, Mar. 17 - 20; Sun., 11 a.m.; 6 p.m. nightly; David Shepherd, speaker; Jim Meadows, pastor.

Easter Services

► **Corinth Church, Heidelberg:** Sunrise service, Mar. 31, 6 a.m.; Jamie Matthews, pastor.

► **Macedonia Church, Petal,** is celebrating Passion Week Mar. 27 - 31. Wed., Solemn Prayer Service, 6 p.m.; Thurs., Seder Service (full Passover meal), 6 p.m.; Fri., Secret Church Simulcast, 6 p.m.; Sat., Saturday night of praise, 6 p.m.; Sun., Resurrection Sunday, 8:15 and 10:30 a.m.

OBITUARIES

Thomas Richard "Tommy" Arinder, 70, Mississippi Baptist pastor, died on Feb. 11 at his home in Hattiesburg. Funeral services were held Feb. 14 at Victory Church, Bassfield. Interment followed at Vaiden Cemetery in Vaiden. Donnie McKnight officiated. Arinder was born October 29, 1942, in Winona to Thomas Vester "Shorty" Arinder and Eleanor "Nonnee" Wright Arinder Miles. He attended Vaiden High School, graduating in 1960, and earned bachelor's degree in agriculture and economics from Mississippi State University in Starkville. He was employed at Guaranty Bank & Trust in Belzoni when he surrendered to the ministry at First Church, Belzoni. Arinder received a masters of divinity degree from New Orleans Seminary in 1979 and served as pastor of Eastside Church, Belzoni; Bassfield Church, Bassfield; Immanuel Church, Cleveland; Concord Church, Yazoo City; and Victory Church, Bassfield. He is survived by his wife, Patricia Harman Arinder of Hattiesburg; twin sons, Tim Arinder (Gretta) of Yazoo City and Tom Arinder of Hattiesburg; daughter Denise White (Chad) of Hattiesburg; and four grandchildren. Sauters Moore Funeral Home of Prentiss was in charge of arrangements.

Cornell Daughtry, 79, Mississippi Baptist pastor and Baptist Student Union director, died on Feb. 25 at

Starkville Manor in Starkville. Born January 17, 1934, to Jesse and Jonnie Daughtry, he graduated from Olive Branch High School, Mississippi College, and New Orleans Seminary. He was pastor at churches in Coldwater, New Albany, Winona, Indianola, Rosedale, Brooksville, and Starkville. He also served as director of the Baptist Student Union at Mississippi Delta Community College in Moorhead. He was preceded in death by his parents and eight brothers and sisters. He is survived by his wife of over 58 years, Shelby Daughtry of Starkville; sons, Clay Daughtry (Kathy) of Cleveland, AL, Lee Daughtry (Kathy) of Starkville, and Brad Daughtry (Laura) of Huntsville, AL; sister, Lorraine Goodwin of Horn Lake; and six grandchildren. Services were held at First Church, Starkville, on February 27, with interment in Odd Fellows Cemetery in Starkville. Welch Funeral Home in Starkville was in charge of arrangements.

Walter Franklin Lay, 70, Mississippi Baptist pastor and associational mis-

sions director, died Feb. 3 at his home in Winona. Funeral services were held at First Church, Winona, on Feb. 6 and Antioch Church on Feb. 7, with interment at the Antioch Church Cemetery. He was born October 24, 1942, to Willie Mae and W. J. Lay of Union. He attended Clarke Memorial College in Newton, and was a graduate of William Carey University in Hattiesburg and New Orleans Seminary. Lay preached for 52 years, serving Southside Church, Lucedale; Oak Grove Church, Prentiss; East Philadelphia Church, Philadelphia; State Boulevard Church, Meridian; Ingomar Church, New Albany; Handsboro Church, Gulfport; and Springfield Church, Morton. In April 1984, Lay and his wife Margaret were appointed by the International Mission Board to serve as missionaries in Costa Rica where they served for 15 years while he pastored International Baptist Church and taught at Costa Rican Seminary. The final seven years of his ministry were as missions director for Carroll and Montgomery associations, retiring on Dec. 2012. After re-



LAY

tirement, he was instrumental in the start of a branch of Leavell College of New Orleans Seminary. Lay is survived by his wife of almost 47 years, Margaret Carraway Lay; one daughter, Rebekah Elizabeth Lay; and three grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his parents and a son, David Franklin Lay. Oliver Funeral Home in Winona and Sauters-Moore Funeral Home in Prentiss were in charge of arrangements.

Martin Williams, 85, long time Mississippi Baptist pastor, died March 3 at Golden Living Center in Carthage. Funeral service was conducted March 5 at First Church, Carthage. Interment followed at Blackjack Church Cemetery, Benton. Williams attended Clarke College in Newton and Mississippi College in Clinton. He had been a pastor for over 60 years in Mississippi, preaching at numerous churches in Attala, Calhoun, Leake, Rankin, Scott, Winston, and Yazoo counties. Preceding him in death was his wife, Mary Anne Williams; parents, Ophus and Nola Carter Williams; brother, James Williams; and sister, Marie Williams Hodges. Survivors include sons, Martin "Butch" Williams II (Dorothy) of Lena, and Harry Williams of Brandon; brother Ray Olinger (Helen) of Long Beach; five grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. Wilcox Funeral Home of Carthage was in charge of arrangements.

PERFORMING

cont. from p. 1

Discipleship and Family Ministry Department in Jackson. In addition to spotlighting puppetry, training opportunities included:

- Juggling.
- Clowning.
- Ventriloquism.
- Live performance techniques.
- Cartooning and painting.
- Drama and character development.
- Improvisation.
- Stage combat.
- Costuming.
- Dinner theater production.
- Set design and stage makeup.

- Video production, photography, and lighting.

Hall said CPAF planners focused this year on basic courses and techniques, to help churches that are new to the concept of Christian performing arts or have just begun a performing arts ministry.

"I think we did a better job this year of keeping the 'first-timers' involved and interested without overwhelming them," he said.

Hall expressed appreciation for the CPAF planners and staffers who helped make the 2013 edition "one of the best festivals overall we've had," and he thanked

Ridgecrest Church for hosting this year's gathering. "The Ridgecrest folks were excellent hosts," he said.

The 2014 Christian Performing Arts Festival will be held Feb. 21-22 at Brandon Church, Brandon. CPAF is annually supported by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program and registration fees paid by attendees. It is open to all Christian performing artists.

For more information, contact Hall at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3286 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 286. E-mail: khall@mbcb.org. Web site: mbcb.org.

POLICY

cont. from p. 1

Baptists are sixth with 4,100 units (109,000 youth).

Two prominent Boy Scouts board members, AT&T CEO Randall Stevenson and Ernst & Young CEO James Turley, have been outspoken in their desire to see homosexual leaders and members allowed.

The liberal American Independent website posted a lengthy story March 4 reporting that one in seven Fortune 500 companies donated at least \$10,000 to the Scouts in 2010. "Together, 69 companies donated nearly \$5.3 million to the Boy Scouts that year," the story said.

The intent of the story,

which was re-posted on the left-leaning news website HuffingtonPost.com, apparently was to pressure companies to withdraw their support until the Scouts change. It included a list of all 69 companies.

The American Independent story came around the same time that singer Carly Rae Jepsen announced she won't be performing at the Boy Scouts' national jamboree in July because of the current policy. Another scheduled band, Train, said it won't perform if the policy stays in place.

Richard Land, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville, penned a letter to the Boy Scouts Jan. 31, asserting that changing the current

policy defies common sense.

"[W]ith the admission of homosexual Scout leaders, the BSA would place men, who by their own definition are sexually attracted to men, in close, supervisory proximity to teenage boys, which invites real human tragedies. We are not saying homosexuals are pedophiles," Land wrote. "However, how many parents would send their teenage daughters on camping trips with heterosexual male troop leaders? They would not — not because they believe that such heterosexual men are pedophiles, but because they realize that under such close, supervisory care of men who by definition are attracted to women, human tragedies could, and inevitably would, occur."

Need a light?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Honor God in Your Service • 1 Timothy 3:8-13; 4:6-16

Most Baptist churches have deacons whose roles vary. Some deacons serve mainly as ushers - welcoming guests, taking the offering, and locking the doors. Other deacons minister to families and others serve in leadership positions of the church. Some are the leadership of the church. Others combine some or all of these roles. Whatever role the deacons serve in your church, the biblical position of a deacon is that of servant.

The Greek word from which we get our term "deacon" sounds very much like our word, and is literally translated "servant." Whether deacons are authorities, ushers or any combination, the Scriptures demand that they should be servants.

This week's Sunday School lesson helps us understand the qualities needed for effective service as described in our Scripture passage. Since all believers are called to serve whether as deacons or not, this information about deacons will help us each to see the qualities required to serve the Lord in His church.

The original deacons were chosen to serve food to widows, according to Acts 6. When this problem arose, the apostles told those addressing the complaints, "Therefore, brothers, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we can appoint to this duty," Acts 6:3 CSB.

From this passage in Acts we learn the four qualifications of biblical servants: of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit, full of wisdom, and dependable. We will examine each to learn more, connecting each section with a corresponding section of our lesson passage, 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Servants must be of good reputation. Those who know God's servant best, in and outside the church, should never be surprised that he or she is serving in any church capacity. 1 Timothy 3:8 echoes the requirement for a good reputation saying a deacon must not be hypocritical. The Greek word for hypocritical, *dilogos*, means two words, or double speak. Those who serve the Lord in His kingdom must speak the same at work, home, or play as they speak at church. No genuine servant of the Lord has to clean up his language or his act to go to the Lord's house.

1 Timothy 3:9 also supports a good reputation for the deacon must serve from a clear conscience and with clean

scruples. 1 Timothy 3:11 insists the deacon's wife does not slander and is sober. That Greek word means no drinking as well as clear headed.

Servants must be full of the Holy Spirit. 1 Timothy 3:9 says that deacons must be holding the mysteries of the faith. The Greek word translated "holding" is a participle, demanding ongoing action. That means the servant of God must not simply be saved or have a testimony of what God has done. He also must be daily walking in the Holy Spirit, listening to the Lord's voice, and obeying the Lord. The servant of God is currently holding the mysteries of the faith. These mysteries are not permanently learned, but must be continually experienced.

Servants must be full of wisdom. 1 Timothy 3:12 requires deacons to manage their children and their own households competently. This requires God's wisdom, described in James 3:17 as, "first pure, then peace-loving, gentle, compliant, full

of mercy and good fruits, without favoritism and hypocrisy," CSB. Wisdom is a gift from God given to those who seek it, and much needed by God's servant.

Servants must be dependable. That means they actually show up for service. God's servants are not intermittent or inconsistent. 1 Timothy 3:10 requires that deacons be proved first. The Greek word translated "first" is *prōton*, from which we get our word pronto. This verb translated "proved" is passive and imperative, which means God tests them, then they can serve as deacons. The imperative part means they must have been tested before they serve. Dependability is essential for God's servants.

All four of the qualifications are necessary. In this case, three out of four is not good enough. If one tire on a car goes flat, the car goes nowhere. All four of these characteristics are vital for service to the Lord. Would you want a pastor who is unreliable, or one who has no godly wisdom, or one who does not depend on the Lord, or one who is known for ungodliness? All servants should have good standing, be full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom and be dependable. Honor God in your service by meeting His requirements to serve.

Henson is pastor of Oakdale Church, Brandon.



Explore the Bible

with Rick Henson

Indifference or Compassionate Action? • Luke 10:25-37

Through one of their advertising jingles, a well-known insurance agency seeks to portray that, "like a good neighbor," their company is "there" to serve the needs of their clients. In this week's study (the third in the series: "Questions Jesus Asked"), a favorite New Testament story challenges us to examine our lives as we relate to others. Are we more apt to display indifference or compassionate action? Join me as we prayerfully allowing the microscope of Scripture to examine our heart and actions.

On one occasion, "an authority on the law stood up to put Jesus to the test" (vs. 25, NIRV). Riveting his conniving eyes on the Lord, this Jewish expert asked what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus asked him what the law said, and the man responded with answers based on Deuteronomy 6:5 (loving God) and Leviticus 19:18 (loving our neighbor). Christ accepted his answer: "Do that, and you will live." However, "the man wanted to make himself look good" (vs. 29). Evidently, he knew he didn't measure up, so he sought to find a way around the requirements by posing another question: "And who is my neighbor?"

Jesus, the master story-weaver, responded with a parable. He gathered a cast of four characters: a man victimized by robbers, two respected Jewish figures (a priest and a Levite), and a Samaritan (a people de-

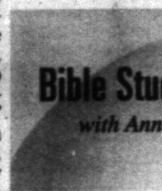
spised by Jews). As the story goes, the badly-beaten man, left for dead, was ignored by the religiously-elite; but was graciously cared for by the traveling Samaritan. You'll note that each of the three "saw" the victim. However, only one felt compassion, which expressed itself through the lavish giving of his time and his resources.

"Which one of these three people was a real neighbor to the man who was beaten up by the robbers?" Jesus asked the law-expert. "He who showed mercy on him," the man answered, probably through clenched teeth. Note that he couldn't even bring himself to say the word "Samaritan."

Do we, like this Jewish leader, sometimes try to rationalize away God-ordained opportunities? Do any of these "shoes" fit? "I'm so busy, I can't take on any other responsibilities right now." "If they'd have made better decisions, they wouldn't be facing this situation." "I'm not a counselor; I'm afraid I'd say the wrong thing." "The church has a benevolent fund to help

with that." "Lots of people know about this need; I'm sure someone else will tend to it." "I don't relate well to youth; that's not my calling." "Visiting nursing homes depresses me."

We've all either heard similar comments, or said/thought such things ourselves. Often, these aren't valid reasons not to get involved, they're merely excuses we hope our fellow-man will find acceptable.



Bible Studies for Life

with Ann Maniscalco

However, God knows our heart: "All a man's ways seem right to him, but the Lord evaluates the motives" (Proverbs 16:2 HCSB). As always,

Jesus provides the perfect example of how to respond. In Matthew 9, we see our Lord bringing physical healing, fellowshiping around the table with those considered the scum of society, raising the dead, giving sight to blind men, and casting out demons. His tender heart provided impetus for life-transforming touches of grace. Verses 35-37 show that Jesus "went" though the villages, He "saw" the people, and He "had compassion on them" (NIV).

"Go and do likewise," was Jesus' response to the Jewish leader with whom he dialogued (Luke 10:37). Other Scriptures flesh out this command. James 2:14-18 addresses the faith aspect, and 1 John 3:16-18 emphasizes love. Obviously, as individuals, we aren't called to minister to every need we encounter, but each of us is responsible for those "good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10).

A familiar tale conveys the value of even seemingly insignificant acts. It goes something like this: As an old man walked along the beach, he noticed the surging tide had deposited countless starfish on the shore. Continuing his walk, he saw a young boy bending to the sand and flinging something into the surf. Approaching the boy, he saw him tossing still-living starfish back out to sea. Scoffing, the man said, "There are thousands of starfish here; how do you expect your efforts to matter?" The boy gazed at him, picked up a starfish that lay between them, and hurled it across the waves. As it disappeared beneath the surface, the boy quietly said, "It mattered to that one."

Emulating Christ's compassion, may we be Samaritans rescuing starfish this week.

Maniscalco is a member of LeMoyné Boulevard Church, Biloxi.

KING

cont. from p.2

your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship. To the church at Corinth he writes, "Do you not know that your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit who is in you,

whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought at a price" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Jesus "died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for the One who died for them and was raised" (2 Corinthians 5:15).

We belong to King Jesus

because He purchased us for God. Because of His mercies, we should fully surrender (present or even consecrate) our bodies and our lives to serve Him. We follow His example when we pray like Him: "not My will, but Yours, be done" (Luke 22:42).

As we come before Him to

pray, our King is looking for entire consecration and full surrender to hear and obey His will. Let's consecrate ourselves to our Lord and King in full surrender.

King Jesus, I'm your man (woman). My time, plans, possessions, resources, career, family, health, future and my

very life are yours. Command me today, and I will obey you.

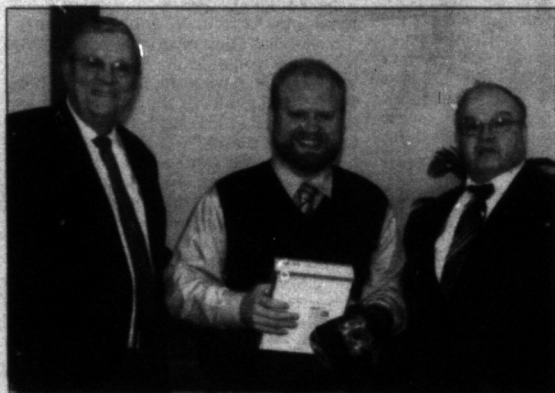
Editor's note: King is discipleship and church health specialist at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville. His commentary appears here courtesy of Baptist Press.

Just for the Record



Ken Regan, pastor, **HERITAGE HEIGHTS CHURCH, LAUREL**, was selected Humanitarian of the Year by the Junior Auxillary of Laurel. The person honored is "one who emulates the spirit of the organization by working tirelessly and unselfishly on behalf of the children, youth, and families of Laurel and Jones County." He is shown with his wife Katrina.

MT. COMFORT CHURCH, BRUCE, presented Dub Harrelson with the title of Pastor Emeritus during a service on Jan. 27 for nearly 30 years of service. Shown are pastor J.R. Eaton and Harrelson.



WILLOW GROVE CHURCH, COLLINS, hosted the ordination service of Lee Faler, pastor of Vanilla Church, Lawrence County. Lee was presented a Bible. Shown are Ralph Sims, Faler, and pastor Rocky Holston.

NEW PROVIDENCE CHURCH, HAZLEHURST, ordained Gerald Baker as deacon Feb. 17. Shown are Mary Baker, Baker, and pastor Brad Moak.



The children of **NEW LIBERTY CHURCH, MORTON**, celebrated Children's Ministry Day Feb. 16. The children made hygiene bags to be distributed in the community, birthday cards to be given to the Mississippi Care Center residents, sung for the residents there, and ended their day working at the Scott County Crisis Center. Twenty children and volunteers participated.



The children of **SOUTH MCCOMB CHURCH, MCCOMB**, participated in Children's Ministry Day Feb. 16. The children and leaders enjoyed a scavenger hunt and collected canned goods for the Pike County Association.



Kids and youth from **PINEVIEW CHURCH, LAUREL**, are shown enjoying themselves at an early Sunday morning breakfast.